

# Lubicon Lake Nation

## Indigenous Knowledge and Power



# The Journey

- The Lubicon have traveled on these lands for thousands of years without realizing they were trespassing on PetroCanada's territory.



# Sacred Sites and Development



- Fish Lake – where the Lubicon have conducted ceremonies and collected medicines for their entire history.
- A request for a moratorium on logging and development was ignored and this location was the first to be opened to development.

# 109 years of resistance

- **1899 Treaty 8 Commission.** Commission only acquired signatures in communities along the Peace and Athabasca Rivers. Ignoring the majority of interior Indians. Lubicon were aware that Treaty Commission was in progress but were unable to make contact and be represented in the process.
- **1917-1918 Spanish Flu Epidemic,** population drops from 2500 to 200.
- **1934 letters** requesting recognition as a band and inclusion in Treaty 8 were drafted with the assistance of missionaries. Because of problems with interpretation, representatives that presented the letters were given membership in the Whitefish band.
- **1939** recognition as a band and lands surveyed for establishment of reserve.
- **1940** Indian Agent Schmidt calculated reserve lands to be 128 acres for 127 adults requiring 25.4 sq. miles

# 109 years of resistance

- **1940 Oil discovered in Lubicon territory**
- **1942 Indian Agent McCrimmon removed 90% of members from band list. Thus eliminating the 'need' for a reserve.**
- **1954 mission school built**
- **1979 200 Moose harvested**
- **1979 10% of band members on welfare**
- **1980 First road into community**
- **1980 10 oil companies with over 400 wells drilled**
- **1984 19 Moose harvested**
- **1984 95% of band members on welfare**

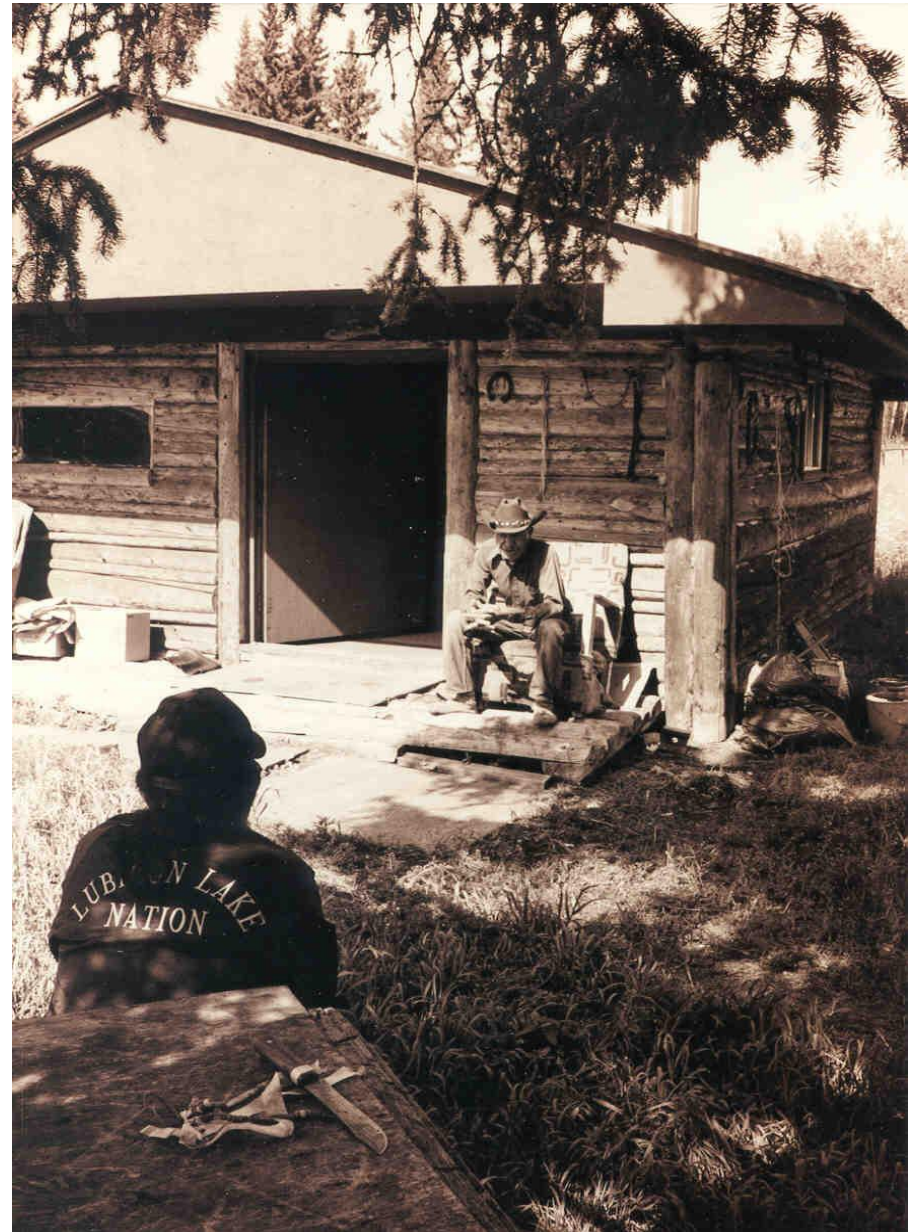
# 109 years of resistance

- **1987 UNHRC concludes that Canada was violating the fundamental human rights of the Lubicon**
- **1988 Diashowa pulp mill built (lease of 11 000 sq miles of which 4000 sq miles were Lubicon territory)**
- **Early 1990's logging camp equipment near Fish Lake caught fire, the entire band council and 14 other male members were charged with felony arson. Charges were eventually thrown out of court.**



**Visiting Elders in Fish lake  
their traditional  
hunting/trapping grounds**

They seem to want to wipe us out instead, don't know why...A lot they do doesn't make sense , destroying the land water, air. No matter, they think their above all this-they're not. They're needing air, water, food, and they can't see what will happen to us will happen to them too. They don't think about their children either (Albert Laboucan)



# Lubicon attending “Drum Beat” conference on Haudenosaunee territory





**The first Drum Beat:  
Edward Laboucan**

The beginning of helping the Lubicon Lake Nation with the Haudenosaunne Confederacy was the real agenda for the gathering.



The confederacy chiefs meeting after the “conferences” often until 2 a.m. sharing stories of what was and what is coming.

Land means life to us, a way of life. We enjoyed something we are losing. For our people that is the only way. ...It is very important that we try to hang on to on to as much of our homes as we can, the animals that we survived off of. If we lose that, we have lost more than we can ever recover. Start losing your ways, then your identity and then your pride, everything else...when you know who you are , your culture, your traditions, Because when you are strong, your mind and heart are strong, your values, your beliefs, it's what gives you purpose. That is why the government worked so hard to break that, to break us in that way. Now look around at our societies, the damage that is being done to our spirits, our land. (Chief Ominayak;1990)





# Haudenosaunne: Longhouse built to honor relationship with Lubicon Cree



# Summer Joe





We have survived off the land for many years, and everything that we do surrounds the land. For example , through our prayers and the ceremonies that we have everything is tied back to the land. It is like a newborn baby and the attachment it has to their mother. It can't go on it's own....but what we saw and what we experienced is the white priority, or oil developments or governments, all they're concerned with is money. Money is like land to us...

Chief Ominayak



# The women:



- A Women's Circle was started in response to the fear that most adult men in the community were going to be taken away to prison.

# The children

- Skin conditions and autoimmune disorders are now common.
- FAS/FAE is a continuing concern of the community.
- Schools, clinics, water treatment, and any other permanent structures to house services do not receive approvals or funding because of unclarified status of reserve lands.





Their resistance to being boxed in and forced to put fencing up was profound





Ovide Mercredi and the AFN offered support but in the end were powerless to stop the development. Chief Ominayak stated that he hated going to Ottawa or any city-in the end.







The hunters: while they fought off multi-national logging and oil companies they still had to feed their families and rely on the land for their subsistence



# The Tea Dance: The ceremonies informed their world view and re-affirmed their ancestors values





